UNCLASSIFIED

Department of State

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-16

INFO	OCT-01	ADS-00	INR-10	EUR-12	SS-15	CIAE-00	DODE-00
	H-01	IO-15	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-06	PM-07
	PA-02	INRE-00	ICAE-00	SP-02	SPRS-02	/089 W	

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O 181415Z FEB 81
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2449
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PAN//INTAFF

UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR 1261
ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: PINS PINT SHUM ES
SUBJECT: HOILY FOR FEBRUARY 15

1. SUMMARY: DURING HIS FEBRUARY 15 HOMILY BISHOP RIVERA SPOKE ABOUT THE FEBRUARY 9 EXPLOSION WHICH KILLED EIGHTEEN PEOPLE NEAR SUCHITOTO AND THE ARREST LAST WEEK OF TWENTY ONE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS. RIVERA CONDEMNED THE SUCHITOTO ATTACK BUT WAVERED IN HIS EXPLANATION OF THE INCIDENT BY FIRST BLAMING THE LEFT AND THEN CLAIMING THAT THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT A RIGHTIST GROUP OR SECURITY CORPS MEMBERS WERE RESPONSIBLE. END SUMMARY.

2. APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR ARTURO RIVERA Y DAMAS GAVE THE HOMILY AT SAN SALVADOR METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL FEBRUARY 15. SOME OF HIS COMMENTS FOLLOWS.

3. RIVERA BEGAN CONDEMNING THE FEBRUARY 9 BOMBING OF A TRUCK TRANSPORTING FARMWORKERS NEAR SUCHITOTO (CUSCATLAN) THE EXPLOSION KILLED EIGHTEEN PEOPLE. THE BISHOP CAST DOUBT ON THE RELIABILITY OF THE NEWS REPORTS THAT BLAME THE ACTION ON LEFTIST TERRORISM. NEVERTHELESS, HE CONTINUED AS IF HE AGREED THAT THE LEFT WAS RESPONSIBLE. WHAT, HE ASKED, WAS THE MOTIVE FOR SUCH AN ACTION? HE SUGGESTED SOME POSSIBILITIES. PERHAPS, HE SAID IT WAS THE APPLICATION OF THE LAW OF "AN EYE FOR AN EYE." OR, PERHAPS, THE ATTACK MAY HAVE OCCURRED SIMPLY BECAUSE THE TRUCK WAS TRAVERSING AN AREA CONTROLLED BY THE GUERRILLAS. WHATEVER THE REASON SAID RIVERA, NOTHING COULD JUSTIFY THE KILLING OF THESE INNOCENT PEOPLE. HE SAID THAT IT IS BECAUSE OF ACTIONS SUCH AS THIS THAT THERE IS A GREAT RESENTMENT AMONG THE PEOPLE. A FACT, HE SAID, "THAT EXPLAINS THE LACK OF RESPONSE TO A CALL FOR THE FINAL OFFENSIVE." HAVING SAID THAT RIVERA WENT ON TO SAY THAT IF THE AUTHORS OF THE MURDERS WERE "GROUPS ON THE RIGHT OR AGENTS OF THE SECURITY FORCES" THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE. IN ADDITION, FOR PERFIDIOUSLY UTILIZING THEIR DEED IN ORDER TO PROVOKE POPULAR INDIGNATION AND TO JUSTIFY THE EXTERMINATION OF POPULAR ORGANIZATION MEMBERS.

4. RIVERA CONTINUED BY COMMENTING ON THE CAPTURE OF TWENTY-ONE ADMINISTRATORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR. THE BISHOP SAID THAT THEIR MEETING WAS LEGITIMATE AND NOT ILLEGAL. THE HOLDING OF EIGHT OF THE GROUP WAS PROBABLY DUE, HE SAID "TO DISSAPOINTMENT THAT NO FOR LEADERS WERE FOUND."

5. POINTING OUT THAT THE ARREST OF THE UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS WAS DUE TO A TIP TO THE AUTHORITIES RIVERA WENT ON TO CRITICIZE THE USE OF THESE ANONYMOUS PHONE TIPS. THE BISHOP URGED THAT THE CITIZENRY NOT USE THESE AS A MEANS OF SETTLING PERSONAL SCORES AND URGED THE AUTHORITIES TO VERIFY THEIR INFORMATION BEFORE ACTING AGAINST ANYONE.
CHAPIN

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MJ JUL 1982
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